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Letter dated 22 December 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit a letter from Seongkyu Yoon, Minister of Environment of the Republic of Korea, containing the Gangwon Declaration on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development, which was adopted at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 19 (f).

(*Signed*) **Oh** Joon
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 22 December 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

At the twelfth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which concluded on 17 October 2014 and was held in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, the Parties agreed on a number of outcomes relevant to the discussions in the United Nations on the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals.

The major outcome of the high-level segment, convened under the theme "Biodiversity for sustainable development", was the Gangwon Declaration on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development (see enclosure). The Conference also adopted two decisions on biodiversity and sustainable development: decision XII/4, on integrating biodiversity into the post-2015 development agenda, and decision XII/5, on biodiversity for poverty eradication and sustainable development.

In the Gangwon Declaration, ministers and other heads of delegation agreed, inter alia:

- To welcome the importance given to biodiversity in the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly
- To call for the further integration and mainstreaming of biodiversity in the post-2015 development agenda
- To emphasize the relevance and key contribution of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets and vision for 2050 to the post-2015 development agenda at all levels, and invite the General Assembly to integrate them effectively in the post-2015 development agenda

Other key outcomes of the twelfth meeting include an agreement to double total biodiversity-related international financial resource flows to developing countries; a decision on providing scientific and technical support for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention and the Strategic Action Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; and decisions on traditional knowledge, health and biodiversity, gender and business, subnational and local governments, and stakeholders.

It would be highly appreciated if you could circulate the present letter and its enclosure as a document of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 19 (f). Lastly, I would like to express my sincere request for your leadership and support on mainstreaming biodiversity into the upcoming negotiation for the post-2015 development agenda.

(*Signed*) Seongkyu **Yoon**
President of the Conference of the Parties
to the Convention on Biodiversity
Minister of Environment, Republic of Korea

Enclosure

Gangwon Declaration on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development

We, the Ministers and other heads of delegation, having met in Pyeongchang, Gangwon Province, Republic of Korea, on 15 and 16 October 2014, on the occasion of the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,

Recalling the three main objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity: the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, and their crucial importance to sustainable development,

Recalling the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its tenth meeting, held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010, and its 2050 vision "Living in harmony with nature", according to which "by 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people",

Recalling the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want", which, inter alia: reaffirmed the intrinsic value of biological diversity, as well as the ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic values of biological diversity and its critical role in maintaining ecosystems that provide essential services, which are critical foundations for sustainable development and human well-being; recognized the severity of the global loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems; emphasized that these undermine global development, affecting food security and nutrition, the provision of and access to water and the health of the rural poor and of people worldwide, including present and future generations; recognized that the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities make an important contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their wider application can support social well-being and sustainable livelihoods; affirmed the importance of implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; and recognized that there are different approaches, visions, models and tools available to each country, in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities, to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication,

Acknowledging that biodiversity, the variety of life on Earth, contributes directly to human well-being in many ways, and is also a critical foundation of the Earth's life support system on which the welfare of present and future generations depends,

Recognizing the economic, cultural and social value of biodiversity, and that many economic sectors depend on biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, including water, agriculture, fishery, forestry, health, education, nutrition, housing, energy, trade, industry, transport and tourism sectors,

Recognizing that biodiversity and traditional knowledge are especially important for sustainable livelihoods, particularly for indigenous and local communities as well as poor and vulnerable groups,

Noting that the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the restoration of ecosystems can improve ecosystem functioning and resilience and thereby contribute to the adaptation to and mitigation of climate change, the provision of clean and secure supplies of water, protect coasts and watersheds, and reduce vulnerability to disasters,

Noting also that the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the restoration of ecosystems are key elements of various approaches, such as the creative economy, to create jobs, support livelihoods and human well-being and contribute to sustainable development,

Recognizing that mainstreaming biodiversity into wider sectoral policies, through the integration of conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity into various sectors, is critical to the advancement of sustainable development and poverty eradication,

Recognizing the contribution of the Global Environment Facility, as the financial mechanism of the Convention, to mainstreaming biodiversity and implementing the Convention, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets,

Acknowledging that the lack of sufficient financial resources remains one of the main obstacles to achieving the Convention's three objectives and to implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets,

Aware of and wishing to contribute to the ongoing discussions within the United Nations on the post-2015 development agenda and the elaboration of sustainable development goals,

1. *Welcome* the progress made by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and Governments in developing national biodiversity strategies and action plans for implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;

2. *Celebrate* the entry into force on 12 October 2014 of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity as an early demonstration of our commitment to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and invite Parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Protocol;

3. *Take note*, however, of the conclusions of the fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, according to which current progress is not sufficient to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and biodiversity loss is continuing with adverse impacts on human well-being;

4. *Reaffirm* our commitment and determination to fully implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, recognizing that this requires a range of measures and policy coherence across government departments and economic sectors and the taking into account of different social and cultural values;

5. *Recognize* the need for enhanced technical and scientific cooperation among countries to implement the objectives of the Convention;

6. *Recognize* the crucial role of indigenous and local communities in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;

7. *Reaffirm* our commitment to mobilize financial resources from all sources for the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, consistent with article 20 of the Convention;

8. *Welcome* the Pyeongchang road map for the enhanced implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;

9. *Welcome* the initiatives of the Republic of Korea in support of the Pyeongchang road map — the Bio-Bridge Initiative to enhance technical and scientific cooperation and the Forest Ecosystem Restoration Initiative — as well as the support provided for the ocean-related capacity-building programme;

10. *Welcome* the importance given to biodiversity in the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, and call for the further integration and mainstreaming of biodiversity in the post-2015 development agenda;

11. *Emphasize* the relevance and key contribution of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets and vision for 2050 to the post-2015 development agenda at all levels, and invite the General Assembly to integrate them effectively into the post-2015 development agenda;

12. *Call on* the Parties to the Convention, other Governments, international organizations and stakeholders to link the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda to other relevant processes, such as the Development Assistance Framework process and the national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and to integrate implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets with the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, paying due regard to the key role and contribution of women in sustainable development;

13. *Invite*, as appropriate, the biodiversity-related conventions and organizations to further implement and strengthen cooperation, coordination and synergies when implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020;

14. *Recognize* the role of access and benefit-sharing arising from the utilization of genetic resources in contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability;

15. *Note* that various approaches, such as the creative economy approach, and a holistic perspective in harmony with nature can safeguard biodiversity and forge a path for sustainable development;

16. *Recognize* the importance of cooperation to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the restoration of ecosystems, as well as to further peace among nations in transboundary protected areas, with the mutual consent of the Parties involved and in accordance with decision VII/28, and welcome the Peace and Biodiversity Dialogue initiative of the Republic of Korea to support the work of the Convention on such matters.